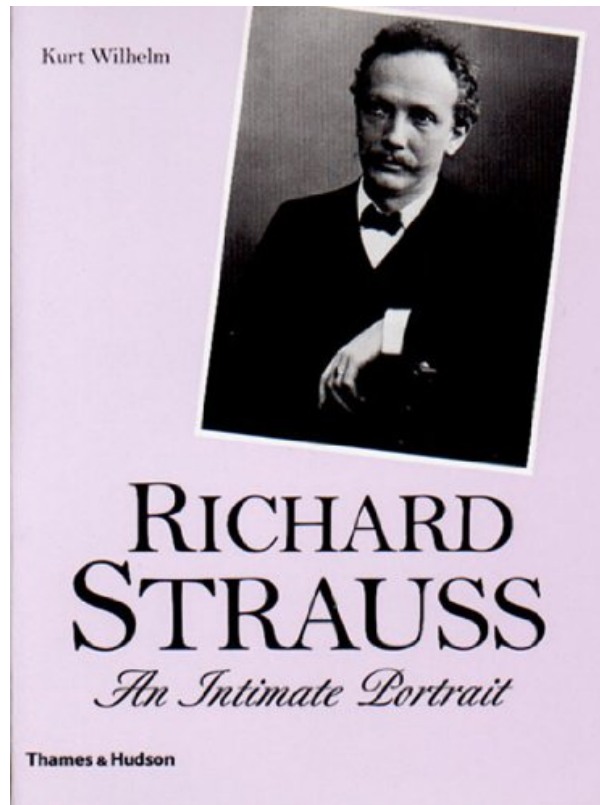
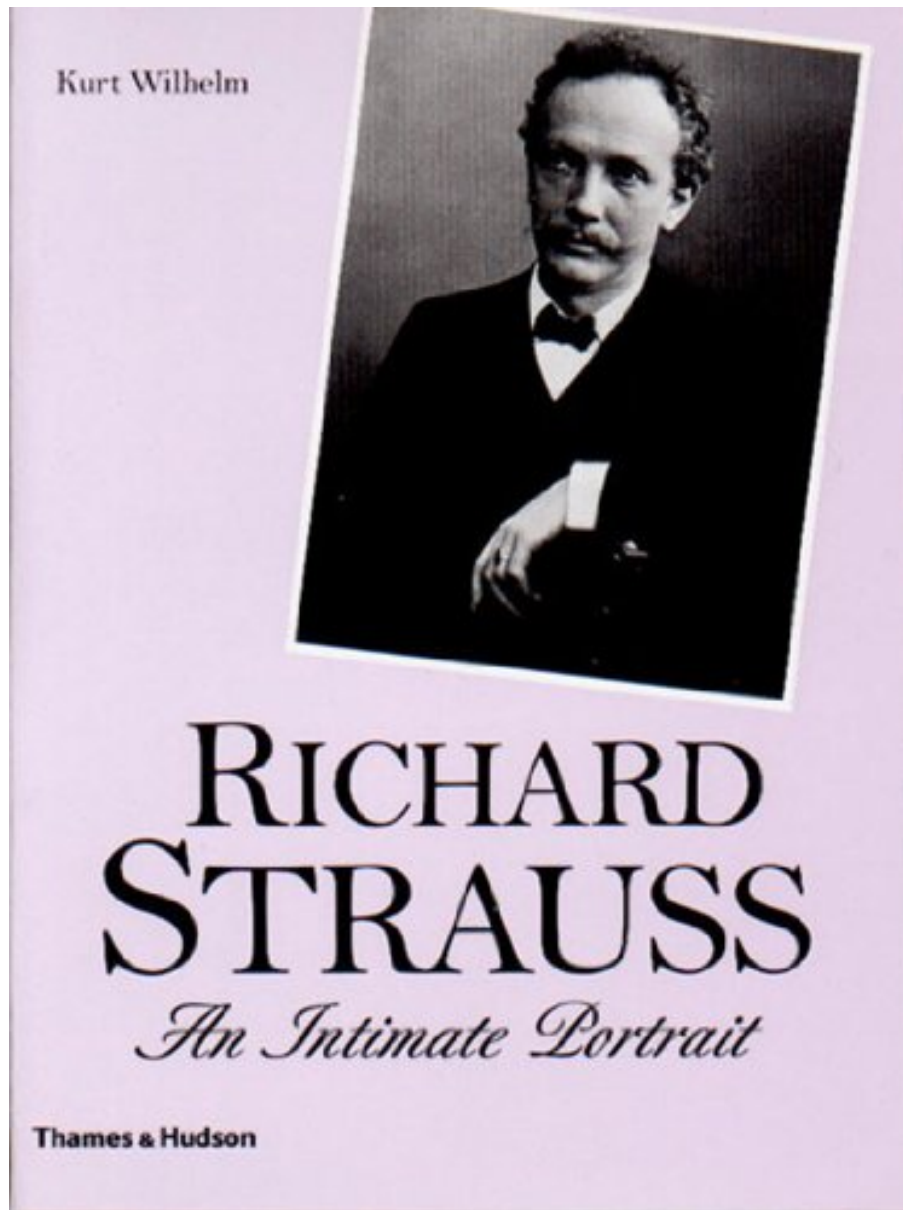


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Language Notes

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From the autobiographical opera, "Intermezzo", based on a domestic misunderstanding, to the self-confident tone poem, "Ein Heldenleben", Richard Strauss's works related to his personal experience as closely as any 19th-century romantic. This is a portrait of the man and his music. A large number of the illustrations are taken from the private archive of the Strauss family. They are woven around the text, which features anecdotes, quotations and personal reminiscences by members of the Strauss family and contemporaries. The result is an intimate investigation of the private life, opinions, background and works of Strauss.

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- Binding: Paperback
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Most helpful customer reviews

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

The Richard Strauss enigma...

By Joann Porter Toll

Many biographies of the most famous German composer of the 20th century have been written, and much time has been spent discussing his political and social opinions since he chose to remain in Germany throughout the Nazi years. This biography is readable, includes many personal little anecdotes not included in other books, and also some of the political discussion, together with excerpts of letters from and to Strauss. It has excellent photos which make the subject more accessible, together with family photos and locales. It covers his life, compositions, anecdotes, and some discussions of his politics, all in one easy to read book. I have read several biographies of Strauss, and found this one to be very personal, entertaining, and informative. It is recommended to any student of German history, musical history, or Strauss in particular.

21 of 22 people found the following review helpful.

Best English-language guide to Strauss the man

By R. J. Stove

You can derive pleasure and profit from other books on Richard Strauss, notably Michael Kennedy's (my review of Kennedy's latest Strauss tome is already on Amazon.com) and Norman Del Mar's; but nobody can claim to know Strauss the human being who has not read Kurt Wilhelm's magisterial account. Wilhelm brings the day-to-day behavior of Strauss and his family to life, in a way that no previous biographer --

however diligent -- has managed to do. You finish this production feeling as if you have met the man.

Wilhelm appears to have been given the run of Strauss-related archives at Garmisch, Bavaria, which earlier chroniclers either couldn't or simply didn't use. Old enough to have corresponded with Strauss in person, Wilhelm (who spent part of the Nazi period in jail) is neither oppressively autobiographical nor mindlessly sycophantic: just quizzical, fair-minded, and courageous in his judgements. I don't imagine Strauss himself would have wanted any other sort of tribute.

The pity is that for this English translation (which itself reads very fluently), the original German text has been considerably cut. It remains a splendid book anyhow; but one wonders why any of it had to be omitted. Do English-speaking readers, even in the brave new world of LITTLE BRITAIN, deserve to be treated as morons?

0 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Tender reference to Hans Frank re: Strauss is jarring to partisans of historical accuracy

By dklar

One curiosity of the book is the author's oddly sympathetic reference to Hans Frank, whose favorable disposition to Strauss (as well as to Gerhart Hauptmann and Hans Pfitzner), the author describes as "always . . . fair, friendly and helpful."

Giving the fanatical Nazi Reich Minister of Justice / Governor General of Poland any credibility for assisting a few `artistic' qualifiers for Aryan status, while arranging the wholesale slaughter of Jews, comes across as an unsavory sin of omission.

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